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THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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MISSISSIPPI
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Ag. Dev.
Foundation
meets March 5

The annual meeting of Agricultural Development Foundation will be held March 5, at First Church, Cleveland. Registration and fellowship will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the program beginning at 10 a.m. Heath Tyree, speaker, will share his experiences setting up a dairy business in an area of East Asia where he served for two years with career missionaries among an unreached people group. His work involved training young people in practical agricultural skills, Scripture, and evangelism. He also helped to set up a reproducible model for a chicken business to help evangelists in the area support themselves and their ministry. The program is designed to help pastors and laymen become better informed on the latest developments in meeting both physical and spiritual needs of unreached rural peoples. For more information, contact the Men's Ministry Department at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3334 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 334. E-mail: cwright@mbcb.org.

NAMB trustees OK reorganization

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — Trustees of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention approved sweeping changes on Feb. 9, altering the focus, strategy, leadership, and organizational structure of the Southern Baptist entity based in Alpharetta, Ga.

The changes come almost five months to the day after trustees voted last Sept. 14 to approve Kevin Ezell, former pastor of Highland Church in Louisville, Ky., as NAMB's third permanent president since the agency's inception in 1997.

The package of changes approved by trustees involves four primary areas:

- NAMB's national strategy.
- a regional approach to how NAMB will do its work.
- an organizational restructuring that will align NAMB's staff chart with its new strategy.
- four new vice presidents who will give leadership to key ministry areas.

"This is a massive overhaul," Ezell said. "We believe it's going to be an historic overhaul."

NAMB's new, but win strategy, titled "Send North America," will focus on mobilizing missionaries and churches for evangelistic church planting. Once churches or potential missionaries have connected with NAMB, after an assessment NAMB will provide any needed equipping and training before the missionary or church enters the mission field.

Evangelism and leadership development will be integrated throughout the process.

"Sending" churches, that partner with NAMB will have a range of participation options, including starting a church. Smaller churches can participate in clusters with other churches. All will be encouraged to send mission teams, volunteers, and other resources to directly help and partner with church planters on the mission field.

Both sending churches and new church plants will be expected to contribute to Southern Baptists' Cooperative Program and to minister in a manner consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

"This entire strategy points everything we do toward assisting churches in planting healthy Southern Baptist churches," Ezell said. "Our desire is to mobilize thousands of Southern Baptists to be engaged in church planting."

He added, "Right now there are four percent involved; our initial goal is to see 10% of churches involved in evangelistic church planting."

The Send North America strategy will take on a regional focus. NAMB trustees approved a new approach to the board's work that will divide North America into five regions: Northeast, South, Midwest, West, and Canada. Each region will have its own vice president who reports directly to Ezell and will work closely with state Baptist convention leaders in that region.

Ezell said state leaders have been an integral part of shaping the new direction for NAMB, and that he is thankful for the lengths state executives have gone to work with him.



LEADERSHIP TEAM — Kevin Ezell (left), president of the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Alpharetta, Ga., discusses strategy with his four new vice presidents (from left after Ezell): Larry Wynn, vice president - evangelism; Steve Davis, vice president - Midwest Region; Aaron Coe, vice president - mobilization; and Jeff Christopherson, vice president - Canadian Region. (BP photo)

"We relate with 42 state association executives. It's vital we work together — not because we have to but because we want to. They have been incredible. They, too, have a heart to reach North America and they all have a heart for reaching the underserved areas," he said.

Ezell noted that 80% of NAMB's funding to states already goes to unreached regions and when money starts shifting from Southern states to unreached areas, that percentage will go even higher.

As NAMB funding to Southern states is reduced, Ezell said state leaders will be able to direct that money to specific unreached regions of their choosing. NAMB activity in the South will continue, Ezell said, noting, "We'd be very remiss if we did not continue to invest in the South and plant churches in those areas."

Ezell indicated NAMB hopes to have new integrated strategic partnership agreements signed with each state convention by the end of March.

NAMB will prioritize its efforts in 50 population centers throughout North America. The initial 25 cities are:

- New York, Washington/Baltimore, Boston, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh in the Northeast.
- Atlanta, Miami, and New Orleans in the South.
- Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul, St. Louis, Cleveland, and Indianapolis in the Midwest.
- Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Portland, San Diego, Las Vegas, Salt Lake City, Phoenix, and Denver in the West.
- Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal in Canada.

Trustees also approved four candidates for vice presidents that Ezell presented

for a vote: Jeff Christopherson, vice president - Canada region; Steve Davis, vice president - Midwest region; Larry Wynn, vice president - evangelism; and Aaron Coe, vice president - mobilization.

Ezell said he would cover the Northeast and West regions until vice presidents can be found. Richard Harris and Carlisle Driggers will be NAMB's ambassadors to the South region until a vice president can be named.

Harris is a retired NAMB vice president who served as NAMB's interim president in the year leading up to Ezell's election. Driggers is the retired executive leader of the South Carolina Baptist Convention.

Six work groups, all focused on the overarching goal of evangelistic church planting, will exist at NAMB's Alpharetta office: evangelism, mobilization, equipping, ministry controls, communications, and missions support.

Other NAMB ministries such as Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, mission education, and social ministries remain but will be more specifically focused on supporting the evangelistic church planting process.

Ezell said there are "some very positive things already happening," referring to budget reallocations that will put millions more in funding on the field for missionaries. "To put \$9 million more dollars to missions on the field in just six months, that's much faster than the SBC directed."

Wrapping up the trustee meeting, Tim Dowdy, chairman of NAMB's trustees and pastor of Eagles Landing First Church in McDonough, Ga., said, "One of the things I really sense from talking to you [trustees] is a lot of excitement about our new direction."

"It is thrilling to be on the right road headed down the right path, ready to impact America with the Gospel."

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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The children of Mississippi

Last week's editorial in this space, entitled *The Children of St. Martin*, recounted a Newsweek magazine article regarding the small Alaska village of St. Martin, where a series of Roman Catholic priests and workers allegedly molested virtually every child in the village over a period of nearly four decades.

The Newsweek article detailed the suicides, abortions, alcoholism, and wrecked lives that had been wrought on the children due to this alleged misconduct.

The editorial concluded with a plea not to allow such a tragedy to occur in our Mississippi Baptist churches.

The reaction to the editorial has been visceral. Some respondents knew of friends or family members who had been molested in a setting related in some way to a church, and some respondents were victims themselves.

Among the most heart-rending responses was this story from a lifelong Mississippi Baptist. The name of the writer has been withheld, as have any details that might lead to the identification of the accused molester or his young victim:

Nothing can be proven at this point, and the statute of limitations has probably expired on this crime. It is the moral of the story that is important.

I still remember a Baptist preacher who molested me. I was twelve and thirteen years old. He stayed at our home while leading our church's revival. My parents, like everyone in the church, thought he was just great. I never told anyone what he did until I was grown and then only my wife. I'm sure he molested many other youth during his career.



A program that aired recently on Mississippi Public Radio quoted a Colorado law enforcement study which found the average pedophile arrested in Colorado molested around 180 different victims during their lifetime. I would assume the same holds true for Mississippi pedophiles.

A year or so ago I learned that this man is retired and living in Mississippi. I suffered no lasting emotional damage from his actions and forgave him long ago. I know I should have reported him to authorities at the time, or as soon as I became old enough to fully understand what he was doing, but I didn't. I see no purpose in naming him at this point. He is probably too old to hurt anyone now and whatever damage he did, has been done.

Certainly our churches today need to be more vigilant than were the churches of my youth. Thank you again for your editorial.

We tend to read about such violations in far away places like Alaska and comfort ourselves with the thought that it couldn't happen here, not in the Bible Belt, not in Mississippi, and not in a Mississippi Baptist church. Think again. All of us would like to believe that child molestation happens at a minimum among our own churches, and that's probably true — but one case is too many. It does happen in Mississippi, and it does happen in Mississippi Baptist churches that are unprepared.

There are concrete steps that churches can take to shrink the risk almost to zero. No system is perfect and no plan is flawless, but every Mississippi Baptist church should take the actions necessary to shield our precious children from this ever-growing danger in our midst. Sexualizing children is one of the most serious problems in American culture, and it is sinking into our churches.

The consequences of letting down our guard are too high. Too much is at stake, up to and including the souls of our children. Get started today.

Planned Parenthood: willing to aid child prostitution?

WASHINGTON (BP) — Another series of videos secretly recorded at Planned Parenthood clinics, this time allegedly showing its employees agreeing to aid sex traffickers whose prostitutes are in their early teens, has renewed calls for the federal government to defund the country's largest abortion provider.

From Feb. 1-8, the pro-life organization Live Action released video footage from hidden-camera investigations at six clinics that showed Planned Parenthood staff signaling cooperation with a self-described pimp in testing for sexually transmitted diseases, and providing birth control and/or abortions for his alleged under-age sex workers.

The pimp, and in some cases a prostitute who accompanied him to the clinics, were actors doing undercover work for Live Action. The videos were shot at Planned Parenthood clinics in New Jersey, New York, and Virginia from Jan. 11-14, according to Live Action.

After the first video was released, U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind., called for passage of his bill, the Title X Abortion Provider Prohibition Act, to

eliminate federal funds for Planned Parenthood.

The Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), which has 95 affiliates and 865 health centers nationwide, showed in its 2008-09 report it received \$363.2 million in government grants and contracts during the year. Its affiliates performed more than 324,000 abortions in 2008, the latest year for which statistics are available.

PPFA recently issued new rules requiring at least one clinic per affiliate to perform abortions.

The video stings allegedly showing the willingness of Planned Parenthood staff in multiple locations to assist in the sex trafficking of girls as young as 14 years of age are the latest — and likely most damaging — in a series of undercover investigations Live Action has conducted during the last four years.

Video recorded at the Perth Amboy center of Planned Parenthood of Central New Jersey and released Feb. 1 was particularly damaging. An animated Amy Woodruff, identified as the clinic manager, told the pimp and prostitute to have their underage sex workers lie about their ages and those of their sexual partners.

Woodruff encouraged them to take the girls to another clinic, Metropolitan Medical Associates, for abortions because "their protocols aren't as strict as ours and they don't get audited the same way that we do."

Metropolitan Medical Associates, which is in Englewood, N.J., agreed in 2009 to pay \$1.9 million to a young woman who went into a coma for three weeks and underwent a hysterectomy after a second-trimester abortion at the clinic.

Woodruff was asked on the video what sexual acts the girls can perform for the business if they have to wait at least two weeks after an abortion to have intercourse. She said, "Wait up or just be that extra action walking by" to advertise for possible clients.

Said Live Action President Lila Rose after the first video release, "This proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Planned Parenthood intentionally breaks state and federal laws and covers up the abuse of the young girls it claims to serve. Time and time again, Planned Parenthood has sent young girls back into the arms of their abusers. They don't deserve a dime of

the hundreds of millions they receive in federal funding from taxpayers."

Phyllis Kinsler, executive director of Planned Parenthood of Central Jersey, announced later Feb. 1 that Woodruff had been fired.

Video shot at Planned Parenthood centers in four Virginia cities — Richmond, Falls Church, Charlottesville, and Roanoke — and New York City showed similar, if not as dynamic, responses.

"Our investigation clearly shows that minors and young women are at grave risk when they walk through the doors of Planned Parenthood," Rose said.

"It is incomprehensible that a health care provider is so eager to abet a trafficker, and for a national organization which receives public funds to support in this way our national epidemic of child sexual exploitation is vile," said Steven Wagner, president of Renewal Forum and former director of the human trafficking program at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Video and transcripts released by Live Action of the clinic visits are available at www.liveaction.org.

Egyptian crisis may foster relationships

CAIRO (BP) — The long-running social and political upheaval in Egypt which toppled the presidency of Hosni Mubarak on Feb. 11 has also shaken family structures, one Christian worker says, noting that the resulting uncertainty presents a key evangelism opportunity for the global Christian community.

"I think we are going to see more people becoming more open [to exploring ideas] and a lot of people who are going to be seeking spiritual answers," said Brad Carmichael (not his real name), a Christian worker who has spent time in Egypt. "I also believe there are going to be a lot of people who will become a lot more dedicated [in their religion], including Islam."

Carmichael said that the socioeconomic structure in Egypt and primarily in the capital city of Cairo has dramatically shifted Egypt in recent years, from being family-centric, often with extended families occupying multiple floors of the same high-rise apartment, to separation and isolation from family members.

The result is an uncertainty about how to exist in a shifting culture, and it raises a lot of questions in their minds, Carmichael said.

"Whereas [families being scattered across America] is common to us," Carmichael said, "that's not common to them, so in all these new dynamics people are going to look to something to be an anchor. Where they are going to look is unfortunately very limited, so the posture of the church both from within Egypt and without is going to be very important."

This is a key time for us. Some are going to [believe they've found] their answer in Islam, but others are going to look elsewhere."

To the Western world the chaos in Egypt and Tunisia may appear to have been a spontaneous event, Carmichael said, but it has been "brewing for some time." The protests in Egypt particularly, according to The Economist magazine, were not initiated by an uneducated mob but by socially connected, urban professionals and university students with few if any future job prospects.

A variety of news sources have reported the causes for widespread protests as being attributed to a housing shortage, shortages of food and high food prices, low wages, and limited employment opportunities for a population whose majority (45 million-plus) is 25 years of age or younger.

The median age of the United States is 38.6, according to the CIA Factbook.

"The perception of people from the outside may be that Egyptians want to get out of their situation," Carmichael said. "That's not true. The majority of Egyptians I know want to stay there. That's where their life is, where their families are. They love Egypt, but they don't know anymore how to make all the pieces fit together."

Men in Egyptian culture have the responsibility to provide for their families, beginning with purchasing a home before marriage, but with the shortage of housing and wages hovering around \$100 (U.S.) per month, prospects are dim. The need to generate more income for families has driven more women to the workforce, further reshaping traditional Egyptian culture, especially when children are involved.

Many of the factors that led to demonstrations in Egypt and Tunisia are present in neighboring countries around the region. Long-tenured political



UNEASY TIMES — An Egyptian couple, perhaps reflective of the populace, likely want to remain in Egypt and be a part of its as-yet unknown future, a Christian worker says. The collapse of the Egyptian government has eased social tensions between one-disparate groups and allowed the predominant Muslims to get to know their Christian neighbors, the worker says. (BP photo)

leaders are being challenged to change their policies to improve living conditions for people, or get out of office.

Although certain of their cause, people have given less thought to what comes next. It leaves many searching, Carmichael said.

"You see many more women in Cairo with their heads covered now than you did before the 1970s," Carmichael said. "Egypt has for a long time been a bit more secular than some of the countries around it and that isn't the case so much anymore. However, the religion they've gravitated toward hasn't been able to completely answer their questions. There is an angst that they feel with all the changes going on."

"At the same time it is a patriarchal culture and forsak-

ing the religion of your father and grandfather brings great shame to yourself and to your family, but you also have this dynamic with the medium age being so young. The young are a lot more [willing to listen] because they are globally connected through mobile devices and are exposed to a lot more."

"We need to look at the family as a unit and hope the patriarchs can be influenced, but it's sad to think that if Egyptians are going to be reached with the Gospel it may happen through the younger generations and it may skip the older ones."

Carmichael said in light of everything that is happening in Egypt and across the region, the Western church must recognize that an opportunity is blossoming that can't be missed.

Christian worker offers prayer requests for Egypt

CAIRO (BP) — Hayden Hammond (not his real name) has his eye on the men wielding clubs and bats in the streets of Cairo, but not for the reason you'd think.

He doesn't watch out of fear of violence or curiosity about the government's fate. It's the talk between the vigilantes that he's interested in — the bond that comes from shared trauma.

"There's been a divide for some time, and ever growing, between the Muslims and the Christians in Egypt but this whole situation has created some new opportunities for dialogue," said Hammond, a Christian worker who has spent time in Egypt and was there when the unrest escalated in late January, culminating in the resignation of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Feb. 11.

"For the first time, people are getting to know their neighbors, standing together to protect their streets. Now they have a deeper bond, and I think it's going to open up a lot of opportunities for conversations about religion," Hammond said. "It's like, 'Hey, I'm not someone who's just trying to influence your mind, I was the guy who held the stick with you and defended our neighborhood.'"

Could it start a grassroots revival? Hammond has visions, and not all about Westerners gaining access to the region.

"What if, in God's sovereignty, He used this as an opportunity for Egyptians to reach other Egyptians, for an indigenous uprising of the Gospel to start?" he asked. "[Christians] wonder how they can respond, and maybe the best response could be praying for and supporting their

brothers and sisters in Cairo. They are the ones who have access, and they are the ones with the new opportunities to share." He asks Christians to pray for:

- conversations between Egyptian Christians, their neigh-

bors, and fellow protesters that can open doors to the Gospel.

- boldness for Egyptian Christians to share their faith.
- Christ to draw people to Himself as they seek change in their lives.

Looking back

10 years ago

Members of Northside Church, Clinton, celebrate their inaugural service for their new sanctuary Feb. 18. The new sanctuary is dedicated to the memory of the late Nancy Bright, the 20-year member who made the church beneficiary in her will for the purpose of building the sanctuary.

20 years ago

Mississippi Baptists record their largest Cooperative Program giving month ever, with the January total being \$2,267,176, which was \$46,844 higher than the previous high in January, 1990.

50 years ago

The Junior Choir festival at William Carey College attracts 351 participants Feb. 11, with 17 choirs participating in the Southern Division of the State Music Department's Junior Choir Festivals.



THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)

2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)

3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)

4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

BIBLIOPHET

By Charles Marx, 1932 - 2004
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WQSTLNQ SBVCNO
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QJTEGDQ, OBTO UQ
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NOQGN.

RCVNO GQQV OMZ:
OMQFOU-ZFQ

Clue: U = Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Hebrews Four: Twelve

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PRAYER POINT - JESUS, THE MASTER PRAYER-ER

Both Old and New Testaments go to great lengths to try to describe the wonder, the majesty, and glorious nature of Jesus. Isaiah said, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace." He was introduced as Immanuel - God with Us, Jesus - God Saves - and all through the Gospels He is seen as a preacher, teacher, prophet, healer, friend. Over and over, He was seen as a **Master Prayer-er**.

It is as though prayer is the canopy that covered everything He was, all He said, and everything He did. He was, in fact, the **Master Prayer-er**. You can look at almost any point in His ministry and find Him teaching or practicing prayer. In these prayer points, allow me to join with you in thinking about three significant prayer events or dimensions of Jesus' prayer life.

The first one that I would look to is the cup. Hours before the unfolding of the events of the cross, Jesus is in prayer in one of the most profound moments when it seemed as though the collision of the humanity of Jesus and deity of Jesus pulled at each other. He prayed, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, not my will but thine be done." What Jesus saw in that cup was dreadful. He saw the pain of the cross and the calling of God. He saw the agony of the results of sin in a person's life to be placed upon His shoulders. He who knew no sin would experience what all sin is and does to hearts and home. Obviously, it was somewhat of a heart-stopping, thought-provoking moment.

For sure none of us have ever dealt with the will of God to that degree, but in our own walk with God and in our own



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

Prayer Points

prayer time we too must look at assignments from God that may be far more frustrating than fun. They may be misunderstood by those who pass by and may be celebrated by those who may not like us. Yet we recognize that God has led us, put us in this place and position, and promised that He will not forsake us. You may be looking into a cup experience in your own life and struggling with a decision. Today, take a few moments to do what Jesus did, not just to hear what He said, but to follow His actions and say yes to God.

The second great prayer point that I would ask you to look at is on the cross. Following denial, rejection, betrayal, and public humiliation, He hangs on the cross and prays. The first words recorded out of His mouth on the cross are oftentimes the most difficult words that anyone could ever say or pray, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Jesus had taught that if you will not forgive, you will not be forgiven. While He had no sins in His life for which He needed forgiveness, He did the incredible and asked for forgiveness for those who had hurt Him so deeply. It is for that very reason that prayer is oftentimes so incredibly difficult.

No doubt in some way or other or at some time or another

all of us have experienced those kinds of moments when we have felt betrayed, injured, and rejected at the very core of our being. Sadly, we too often turn to the natural responses of simply being angry, bitter, or enraged. Jesus prayed and forgave! It is on that cross that Jesus paid for all of our sins and the debt that is accumulated far beyond just acts of disobedience. It is only by His grace and not just His example but also His marvelous power to enable us that we come to a place where ultimately, regardless of the wrong that may have driven spikes into our hearts, we forgive.

The final prayer event in the life of Jesus I call the continuance. It is as though there is an umbrella of prayer over Jesus' entire life and ministry. He prayed early and late. He prayed before major decisions and He prayed over decisions that would transform a

friend's life from existence in a tomb to living again. He lived and maintained a pattern in life of an open spiritual direct line to the Father. He prayed when life was at its worst, and He prayed when there was not seemingly any imminent crisis. There was a continuance of prayer in His life, a lifestyle of praying.

It seems to be true that it is easier to get to God in the midst of trial and trauma when you have already been to God during the showers of blessings and celebrations. It is one of the things that people have expressed to me that already has been a benefit and a great spiritual blessing as they have committed to an everyday meeting with the Father. I remember when the miners were brought out of the rock tomb that they were entrapped in that in one of the first interviews given the miner said that before those 70 days underground, he was not a praying man but while there, he had learned to pray. I understand, but far better is the strength that comes from learning to pray before you are trapped. You have already established a relationship with the One who can help, and you know where to turn.

Jesus was and continues to be our greatest example of the One who is the **Master Prayer-er**.

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

- Society Hill Church, Oakvale:** Revival, Feb. 25 - 27; Fri., 7 p.m.; Sat., 6 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; James Messer, speaker.
- Calvary Church, Columbia:** Revival, Feb. 18 - 20; 6:30 p.m. nightly; Sun., 10:45 a.m.; Terry Hall, speaker and music.
- New Salem Church, Liberty:** Youth revival, Feb. 17 - 19; Thurs. - Fri., 6:30 p.m.; Sat., 5 p.m.; John Willcutt, speaker; Ankle Deep, music.

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Educating Souls & Reaching the "Ends of the Earth"... Through Mississippi Baptists' Three Christian Colleges

By: Billy Morehead

Mississippi Baptists are reaching the world for Christ through direct support of our three Baptist colleges. Your Cooperative Program dollars are used, in part, educating souls and reaching the "ends of the earth".

Approximately 28% of the budgeted dollars of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) are used in some facet of student and educational support. Over

indicate otherwise is false and quite misleading.

Mississippi Baptists are on mission with God and are about fulfilling the Great Commission - we don't need a resurgence to get us moving in the right direction because we have never lost our focus. We have been about Christ's work for quite some time; and we continue to keep the Great Commission in the cross hairs of all of our efforts.

The Education Commission wants to tell a story over these four pages. We want to show you the far reaching impact of the Cooperative Program dollars given in part-

Mississippi Baptists are on mission with God and are about fulfilling the Great Commission.

\$7 million go toward funding Mississippi's three Baptist colleges. Another \$2 million go toward the support of the Baptist Student work on 18 of Mississippi's state community college and university campuses - combined, all 24 colleges and universities represent a mission field of over 165,000 students from all over the world.

Mississippi Baptists collectively support Blue Mountain College, Mississippi College, and William Carey University through generous gifts to the Cooperative Program. In addition, these institutions receive much of their financial support directly through tuition and gifts from students, parents, alumni and donors.

The Education Commission of the MBCB serves as the liaison between Mississippi Baptists and the colleges. We are blessed to have dedicated and capable leadership through our college presidents: Dr. Bettye Coward (Blue Mountain College), Dr. Lee Royce (Mississippi College) and Dr. Tommy King (William Carey University). Their

impact of the Cooperative Program dollars given in part-

GREAT things are happening at our three Christian colleges. In Genesis 12:3 we read that we have been "blessed to be a blessing." Mississippi Baptists are very blessed, and we are a blessing to others by educating students who go to the "ends of the Earth" fulfilling the Great Commission.

In the fall of 2010, our three Baptist colleges enrolled approximately 9,000 students; of these, nearly 400 were international students from 40 different countries. Each semester, these students are exposed directly to the

gospel, many accept Christ while in college, graduate and return to their home country filled with a love and passion to share Christ with their families and people groups many of whom are in the Last Frontier, those parts of the world where Christian missionaries cannot go.

Alumni from our three Baptist colleges actively share their faith in many far reaching ways throughout the U.S. and around the world: Dr. Elvin Smith, a 1960 Carey

graduate, has dedicated his life to the research of heart and vascular diseases and was instrumental in the establishment of the medical school at Texas A & M. Dr. Smith said, "William Carey reinforced my Christian values, especially the worth of every individual." Valeria Sherard, a 1945 Blue Mountain graduate, felt called to missions during her college experience. After graduation she went to Alaska and worked for 35 years as a Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) missionary until her retirement in 1990. Her passion was sharing Christ's love with the people of Alaska. In 1977, Alaska Baptists named their state mission offering the Valeria Sherard State Missions Offering in her honor.

Dr. Michael Catt, a 1975 Mississippi College alumnus, is the senior pastor at Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, GA. But, he's better known for forming his own production company, Sherwood Pictures,

which has produced such inspirational films as "Facing the Giants" and "Fireproof." Melanie Ward Butler, a 1989 Carey graduate, began her career with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) right after graduating when she moved from Columbia, MS to Los Angeles, New York City and later to London, England where she is now a forensic services partner. Carey's unique blending of a small town caring atmosphere with the international influences of students from around the world allowed Melanie to learn how to approach broader opportunities while maintaining a caring attitude.

Barbie Bassett, a 1993 Mississippi College graduate, is a stellar communicator and author. She is

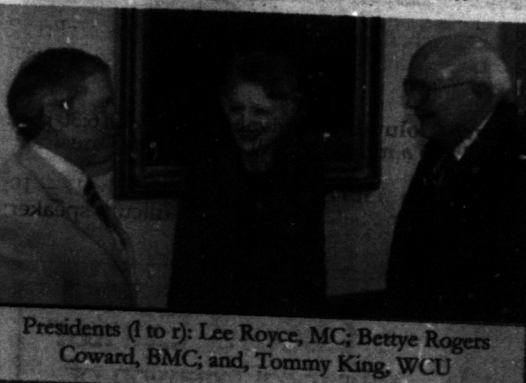
the award-winning Chief Meteorologist at WLBT-TV 3 in Jackson, MS. During the days, weeks and months following Hurricane Katrina, Barbie's strong Christian faith was clearly evident to the viewing public as she covered the aftermath of the deadly storm. The Marks, MS native shares her faith and life's story in her book "Forecasts and Faith: Five Keys to Weathering the Storms of Life." Dr. Jim Futral, a 1967 Blue Mountain graduate, pastored several churches including Broadmoor Baptist Church and has served Mississippi Baptist

as Executive Director-Treasurer of the MBCB since 1998. Dr. Futral's impact for Christ is far reaching. He

authors a weekly article, *Directions*, in *The Baptist Record*; and, recently he has served as President of the Executive Director's Association which represents all state Baptist associations.

So, Mississippi Baptists, through our giving to and support of the Cooperative Program, the impact of our three Christian colleges is far and wide. Let us continue to pray for our colleges, our presidents, our students and their parents, as well as, our college faculty and staff

The Education Commission wants to tell a story...of the far reaching impact of your Cooperative Program dollars.



Presidents (l to r): Lee Royce, MC; Bettye Rogers Coward, BMC; and, Tommy King, WCU

faithful service to our Lord, our colleges and Mississippi Baptists is one of the key reasons our colleges are so strong and unified.

During our meetings, the presidents report on programs, facilities, finances, faculty, staff, and student life; but, perhaps the most encouraging, uplifting and rewarding aspect of each meeting is what we hear from students. They tell us about professors who want them to achieve academically, spiritually and to approach life and learning from a Christian perspective. Students share about their relationship with Christ and the journey that brought them to one of our Baptist colleges.

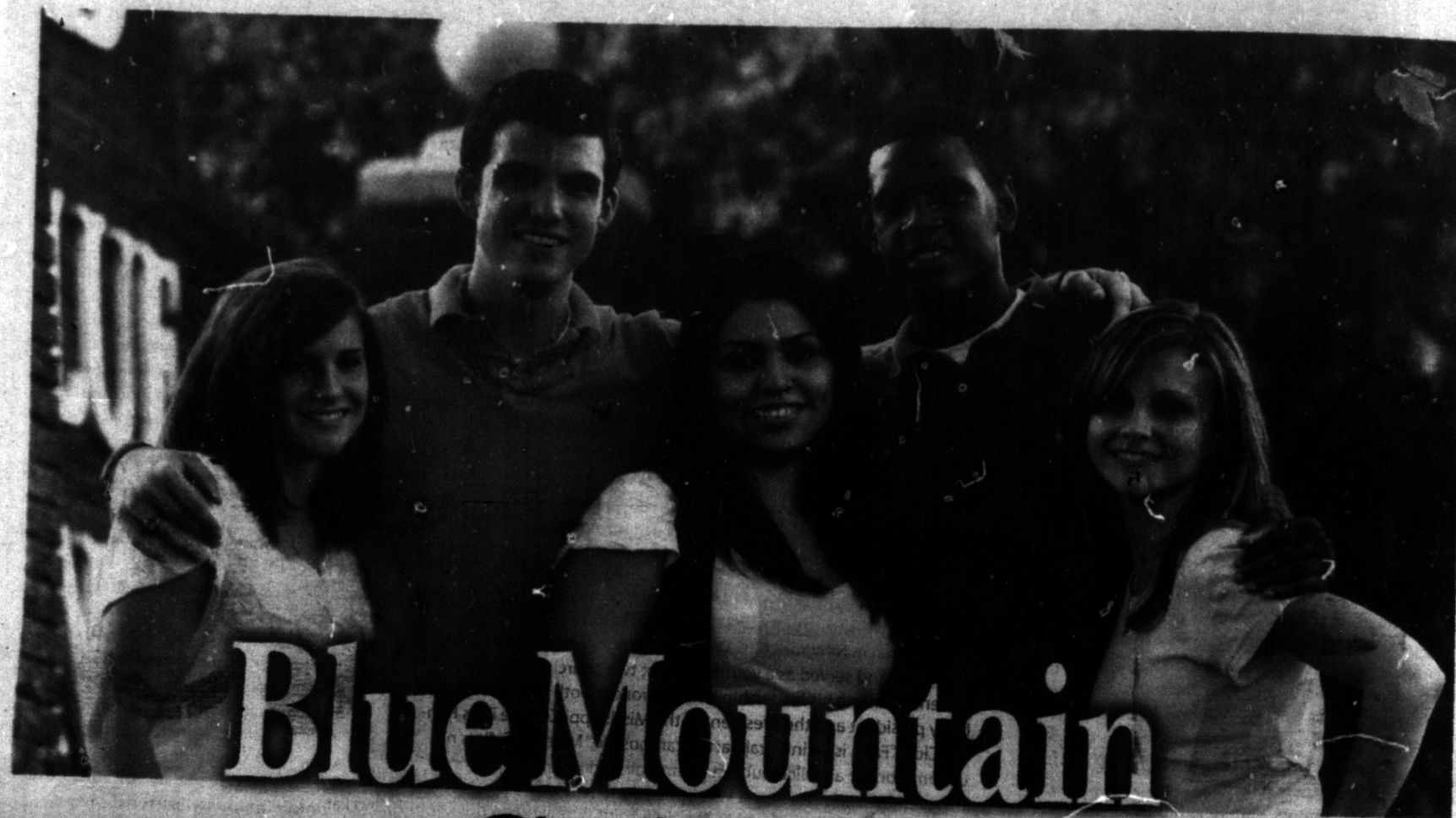
Recently, however, I have sensed some rumbling throughout our Southern Baptist Convention about how some state conventions spend their dollars selfishly on themselves at the expense of not using those dollars for more mission-worthy endeavors. The indication is we should take monies spent in our state and direct them into "real" mission opportunities to fulfill the Great Commission. I submit to you that the MBCB dollars, while spent locally, impact globally; and, for anyone to



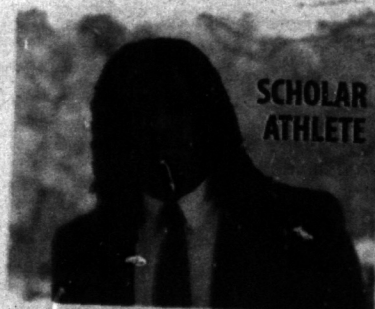
2011 Education Commission members

members. We are on mission with God to reach the "ends of the earth". I thank the Lord for the investment Mississippi Baptists have made and continue to make to Christian higher education.

William A. (Billy) Morehead, Ph.D., CPA, CGFM, is Chair of the Education Commission of the MBCB. Billy is the Chair of the Division of Accountancy, Computer Information Systems and Finance at Delta State University. Billy is a lay member and deacon at First Baptist, Cleveland, Mississippi.



Blue Mountain College



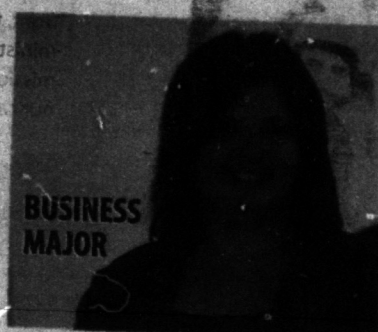
**SCHOLAR
ATHLETE**

An All-TranSouth Athletic Conference basketball player, Lakendrick is serious about performance on the hardwood – and in the classroom. The business major is a TranSouth Scholar Athlete – and his future as a leader in the business community has never looked brighter.



**SUMMER
MISSIONARY**

After spending her summers as a student missionary to the Ukraine, Tusedae decided to pursue a career in healthcare. Her life, both at her Blue Mountain College home and abroad, is testimony that she takes her calling seriously.



**BUSINESS
MAJOR**

Paige has decided the best way to study business is to be involved. A business major, she is a BMC Ambassador and active member of Phi Beta Lambda – which puts her right in the middle of things and right where she belongs.



**PERFORMING
ARTIST**

When Kyle is on stage, he makes it look easy. After countless hours of hard work perfecting his God-given talents, his creative arts ministry will make the world a brighter and better place for all of us.

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MISSION + MEANING

Mississippi College Students Maximize Mission Opportunities

Angela Briggs, Class of 2011

As a youth leader at Solid Rock International Ministries, Angela Briggs teaches and organizes service projects for youth and helps church leaders build and grow the ministry for young people. She also serves as co-chair of service projects for the Student Nurses Association (part of a daily devotional team for first semester nursing students), a resident advisor for her dormitory floor, and a summer camp counselor for the YMCA.



Randall Miller, Class of 2011

Over the course of his college career, Randall Miller has ministered to the homeless, encouraged cerebral palsy patients, and served in a soup kitchen in New York City. The senior also made two mission trips to Mexico, and served as a youth pastor at two churches. Randall is currently putting his leadership skills to work as both the MC student body president and the president of the Mississippi College Bass Fishing Club. "Faith is an integral part of campus life," Miller says. "It is not uncommon for a biblical subject to emerge during a conversation in the cafeteria, or for someone to ask you where you are going to church on Wednesday night or Sunday. The Holy Spirit is moving on this campus, and I am excited about what is happening. One of my friends shared that nine people were saved or, one of the soccer teams last season. That is incredible!"



A Message from Lee Royce, Mississippi College President

As you can see, our students are shining examples of our faith and commitment. Whether they're pouring their hearts and souls into mission trips internationally or on the domestic front, they are intent on sharing the Good News. That's why more than 400 MC students minister at churches and Christian camps, and more than 700 serve as summer missionaries. That's why so many are saved on our campus, and by our students. That's why the International Mission Board ranks MC a top 25 school for producing missionaries.

Our student body truly lives the Great Commission, on our Clinton campus and far beyond our Mississippi home. They embody Jesus' instruction to His followers: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19). As a Christian university, Mississippi College sees the Great Commission as part of our mission. But the Great Commission is more than just a duty to fulfill; it is an honor bestowed upon us by Christ. Our students embrace that honor, and I could not be prouder of the faith community here at Mississippi College.



Brett Barnhill, Hunter Clark, Stirling Foxworth, and Allison Hunter, Class of 2011

The ideals of America's second oldest Baptist college were evidenced a world away in the African bush. Four MC friends, Brett Barnhill, Hunter Clark, Stirling Foxworth, and Allison Hunter, shared a life-changing, soul-saving adventure working in Botswana with Hands-On, a program of the International Mission Board. They decided to sign up after studying under Dr. Robert Fortenberry, a professor in the MC communication department, and the university's missionary-in-residence. They worked in a country where the HIV positive rate runs from 25 to 33 percent, and death due to AIDS is an ever-present reality. Their days included 2 to 3-hour long prayer walks, praying for people in villages, and distributing Bibles and tracts printed in the residents' native languages. They also played soccer with village children, visited AIDS orphanages and organized showings of Christian films.

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PEUS**



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A CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

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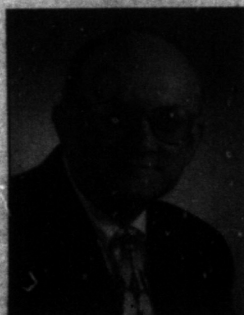
William Carey University

Hattiesburg

Biloxi

New Orleans

"Not to be served... but to serve." ~ Matthew 20:28



DR. DAVID LEE '71

Executive Director of the Baptist Convention of Maryland and Delaware



NANCY '67 AND VICTOR MARIDUENA '67

Serving in Ecuador
Nancy—Coordinator, La Leche League, Inc.
Victor—Advisor on Social Issues to the Mayor
Municipality of Guayaquil
President of Leon Becerra Children's Hospital



DR. BOB MILLS '71

Executive Director of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists

Dear Mississippi Baptists:

When William Carey went to India over 200 years ago to launch the modern missionary enterprise, he said to his supporters back home, "I will go down if you will hold the rope."

That has been the story of William Carey University. When the Baptists were offered the burned-out ruins of South Mississippi College in 1910, the churches of Hattiesburg accepted the challenge, banded together, and a year later presented the school to the Mississippi Baptist Convention debt-free, making Mississippi Woman's College the second institution of higher learning to be associated with Mississippi Baptists. Through the years, and through several name changes, Mississippi Baptists have supported William Carey University.

The Cooperative Program has been the "rope" that has provided the support for "God's School." We at Carey are so grateful for the individual support that we continue to receive, but it is the Cooperative Program that is the lifeline which gives us the stability to achieve William Carey's motto: "Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God."

Come visit us at Carey.

Tommy King
President



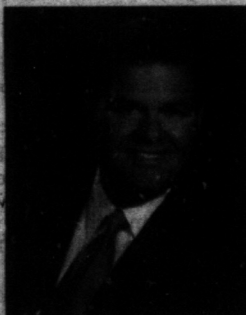
DR. RON HERROD '65

First Vice President,
Southern Baptist Convention
President of RHEMA, a missions ministry



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Christian, Baptist and Ethics

By Jimmy Porter
Miss. Baptist Christian Action Comm.



Porter

"Do you know a good Christian realtor in the Jackson area?" asked one of our Mississippi pastors. He was inquiring on behalf of his son who had just been accepted into dental school. He desires a Christian realtor because he expects that person to be honest, fair, and just.

Shortly afterwards in another conversation an elected official indicated his Christian profession did not necessarily influence his decision in matters related to the well being of his constituents. He felt no moral or ethical obligation to care about citizens who were being exploited by others.

The above comments got me to thinking how easy it is for us to separate our behavior from our beliefs. Webster defines a Christian as one who professes belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ and conforms to a Christian ethic. Ethic is defined as a discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligation.

The word Baptist defines a person

who is a member of an evangelical Protestant denomination marked by congregational polity and baptism by immersion of believers only. Therefore, you can be a Baptist and not be a Christian. You can also be a Christian and not be a Baptist. But you cannot be a Christian and not

have a Christian ethic.

When he or she says they belong to the Christian faith, then they must allow Christian principles to influence their actions and attitudes. John 10:27 says, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them; and they follow me." Jesus said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command." (John 14:15) Even the Old Testament prophet, Micah, understood the expectations of Almighty God when he wrote, "He has showed you, O man,

what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

Some years ago I was introduced to the Rotary civic organization. Their motto is "Service above self, he profits most who serves best." It is a worthy ideal to say the least. But what caught my attention was the "Rotary Four-way Test." The test was developed by Rotarian and entrepreneur Herbert J. Taylor during the Great Depression as a set of guidelines for restoring faltering businesses and was adopted as the standard of ethics by the Rotary in 1942.

These four questions serve as the ethical standard for the business behavior of Rotarians. Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build good will and better friendships? And finally, will it be beneficial to all concerned? Not a bad standard at all, is it? Those questions need to be on every pastor's and every politician's desk.

Jesus mandated that we are to be the "Light and Salt" for our world. He demands a higher standard of ethics for those who claim to be His disciples.

Christian behavior should be the standard for evaluating all other types of behavior. A Christian never has the luxury of leaving his/her ethics at home.

In every action I take it is my duty to ask, "Why are you making this particular decision? What is my motivation? As a preacher, am I acting on scriptural teachings or am I trying to appease powerful members of the congregation? As a politician am I voting my Christian ethic or am I voting to get re-elected or am I voting to appease the ones who throw the most money my way? Am I selling my vote or does my vote at least measure up to the "Rotary Four-way Test"?

No matter your vocation, if you are a Christian then there is a standard of behavior expected of you by your Lord and by your fellowman. I want to say again, "You can be a Baptist and not be a Christian," "You can be a Christian and not be a Baptist," but "You cannot be a Christian and not have a Christian ethic."

The author can be contacted at 601-292-3332 or at jporter@christianaction.com.



Attala County
February 22, 2011
9 AM

Choctaw County
February 22, 2011
11 AM

Noxubee County
February 22, 2011
2 PM

Winston County
February 22, 2011
4 PM

Lincoln County
February 23, 2011
10 AM

Copiah County
February 23, 2011
NOON

Prentiss County
February 28, 2011
11 AM

Tishomingo County
February 28, 2011
2 PM

Attala County Courthouse
230 W. Washington St
Kosciusko 39090

Ackerman Baptist Church
185 E. Cherry St
Ackerman 39735

Noxubee County Courthouse
505 S. Jefferson St
Macon 39341

First Baptist Church
205 South Church St
Louisville 39339

Lincoln County Courthouse
300 South 2nd St
Brookhaven 39601

Copiah County Courthouse
100 Caldwell Dr
Courthouse Dr
Hazlehurst 39083

Booneville City Hall
203 N. Main St
Booneville 38829

Iuka Mineral Springs Park
East Pike Street
(Hwy 172 East)
Iuka 38852

Distribution project gets Bibles into the hands of Asian tourists

SOUTHEAST ASIA (BP) — More than 1,000 Bibles were distributed in seven days as part of Chinese New Year celebrations throughout Asia. At least one volunteer felt the people she met were unusually open to the Christian witness.

Sibil Tharp, a member of First Church in Las Cruces, N.M., thought the distributions had a different feel this year. She started making the annual volunteer trip five years ago and, while she didn't see a rise in the number of Bibles given out, she did see a different reaction from the tourists this time.

"I don't know how to explain it except that God seems to be everywhere," the volunteer said, noting that three Chinese made decisions to follow Jesus this week. "The Chinese are looking us in the faces, making eye contact and smiling."

Volunteers from six different states and two countries partnered in the Southern Cross project, a Chinese Bible distribution ministry based in three countries in Asia that seeks to get as many Bibles as possible into the hands of Chinese tourists.

Due to Chinese government regulations, Bibles are difficult

to obtain in China. However, the Chinese are allowed to bring a Chinese Bible home with them from a trip abroad.

Tharp, who served on the project for six weeks, said more Chinese Christians have approached the Southern Cross volunteers to encourage the ministry than in any of her previous years. She adds that even those who are not Christian seem to be more receptive to the Bibles and open to talking about God.

"This is the most exciting Chinese New Year I've ever experienced," Tharp said. "I hope and pray this is a reflection of what's happening in their country."

Four Chinese tourists stopped to ask if the Bibles offered by the two women from Church at Canyon Creek in Austin, Texas, really were free. The tourists' English was impeccable and an answer to prayer for the volunteers, who had prayed for one-on-one opportunities to share the Gospel. In response, God brought them four English students.

"There aren't many choices in communism, you are told what you can and can't do, but here is a choice you need to make," Hammond told the young

women, leading the conversation to the message she came to Southeast Asia to share. She told how Jesus became her Savior.

"I really believe someone has been praying for that girl," Hammond said. "God has been planting the seeds."

"Boxes aren't success," Moore said. "It's being faithful and planting seeds."

CD or IRA Maturing?

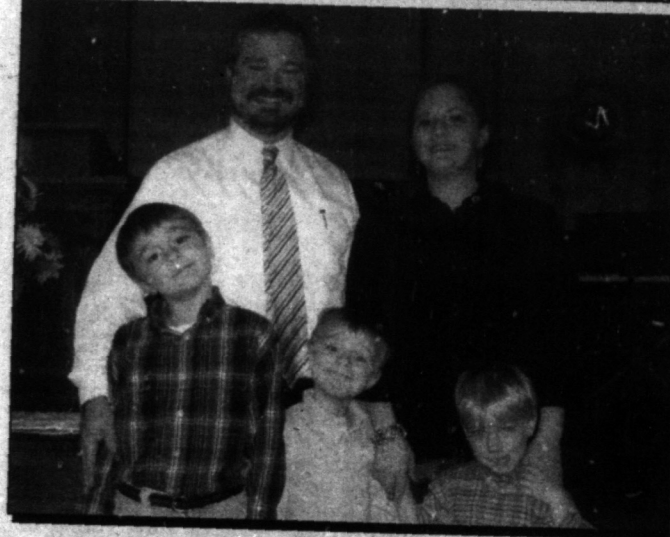
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STAFF CHANGES



1. The Hayes

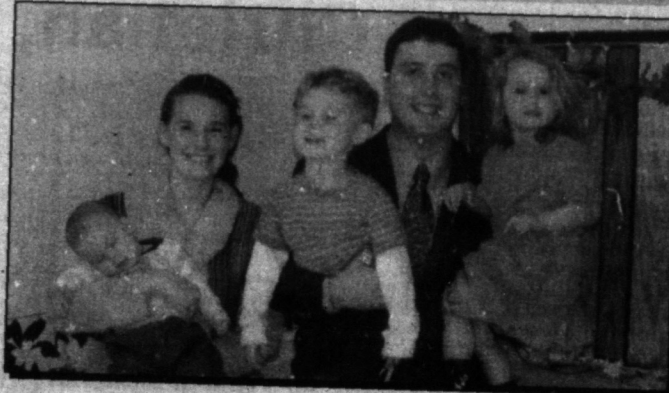
1. **Parkway Church,** Tupelo, has called Cory Hayes as minister of music. He is a recent graduate of Southeastern Seminary. He is shown with his wife, Lucy, and three sons, Wyatt, Eli, and Seth.

2. **Bethel Church,** Hazlehurst, has called Tyson Windom, Roxie, as pastor. He was recently ordained at Roxie Church. He is shown with his wife, Ashley, and children Tyson Jeff, Aubrey Ann, and Colt.

3. **County Line Church,** Overt, has called Koby Easterling as minister of

youth effective Jan. 23. He is a student at William Carey University and lives in Ellisville.

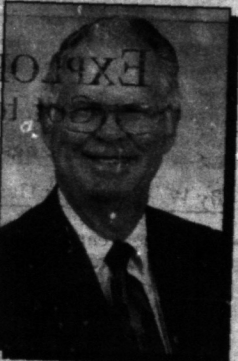
Visit us online at www.mbc.org to learn more about Mississippi Baptist opportunities.



2. The Windoms

OBITUARY

Kenneth Charles Guy, 72, of McComb died February 2, at his family farm in the Knexo Community of Waltham County. Funeral services were at First Church of the Summit where he had been a member for the past ten years. Guy served over forty years at churches throughout Mississippi and Alabama, including Rome, Ruth, Bethesda of Oktibbeha County, Smith County and Simpson County. For the last thirteen years he served as chaplain for Hospice Ministries of Central Mississippi. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Mary Taylor Guy, three children, Susan Guy Harper of Apex, N.C., Sharon Guy Stockbridge of Shalimar, Fla., and Kenneth Matthew Guy of Laurel and eight grandchildren.



Guy

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3. Ellis

COLLEGE NEWS



1. WCU Art Competition winners

1. **William Carey University** hosted the Second Annual High School Art Competition in the Lucile Parker Gallery on February 5. Shelby Allen, a junior from West Jones High School, won Best in Show for her piece entitled "Avatar." Phelan Harris, a junior at Presbyterian Christian High School, won first place for his piece entitled "Still Life." Amanda Blakeney, a senior at West Jones High School, won second place, as well as the President's Purchase Award, for her piece entitled "Pink Lilly." Stefani Cayten, a senior at Purvis High School, won third place for "Ancestral Oath." Katrina Coker, a senior at West Jones High School, won Judge's Favorite for her piece "Colorful Flowers." In addition, the following students received Honorable Mention awards: Haley Ford, a senior at Purvis High School; Jenny Nguyen, a senior at Presbyterian

Christian High School; Omar Rivas, a senior at Collins High School; Kristel Rodriguez, a junior at West Jones High School; and Zina Brown, a senior at Hattiesburg High School. Shown are Blakeney, Coker, Rodriguez, Harris, Nguyen, Cayten, and Brown.

2. **Mississippi College** leaders will spotlight the new headquarters for its physician assistant program during a ribbon cutting ceremony February 28, 2 p.m. Under construction since the summer, the 10,000-square foot Medical Education Center, home of the new P.A. program, is located on the third floor of the Baptist Healthplex on the Clinton campus. The MC center will house classrooms, mock exam rooms, faculty and staff offices, a conference room, and a state-of-the-art video recording system. The first MC students will begin classes in May as they seek

a 30-month master of medicine degree. About 30 students are expected to enroll in the first P.A. class.

3. **Pianist John Ellis** will perform in concert February 28 at 7:00 p.m. in Dumas Smith Auditorium on the Hattiesburg campus of William Carey University. The concert will feature Robert Schumann's Fantasia in C Major, Op. 17, and Franz Liszt's Années de Pèlerinage, Second Year: Italy. Ellis will also present a free master class featuring William Carey University piano majors on March 1, from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. on the Smith Auditorium stage. The public is invited to attend. Tickets for the concert on February 28 are \$10 general admission and \$7 for seniors. WCU students, faculty, and staff are free. Tickets may be purchased at the door or in advance by calling Ellen Elder at (601) 318-6179.

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

God Loves Like a "Grand" Father

Hosea 11:1-11

By Becky Brown

Prior to her recent promotion to Heaven, a dear friend of mine was a member of a sweet church family in New Orleans. The name on their sign reads: "Second True Love Baptist Church." This name of their church had everything to do with their sanctuary relocation project and absolutely nothing to do with how they felt about Jesus. He was then and continues to be their first love. Who is your first love?

The book of Hosea can be divided into two main sections. Hosea 1-3 records the story of Hosea and his wayward, faithless wife, Gomer. Hosea 4-14 tells the story of our loving God and His wayward, faithless people. This story of great compassion applied specifically to Israel then. We would do well to

realize that it also applies particularly to those of us who are alive today. There they were in the 8th century BC and here we are in the year of our Lord 2011. The behavioral similarities are staggering.

In January, we celebrated 1/1/11 and 1/11/11. If we live to see November, we will mark 11/1/11 and then celebrate Veteran's Day on 11/11/11. I'm sure the Lord would desire for us to stand up tall and straight in honor of Him just like all those number ones. God stood a cross up on a hill for us and then He hung His Son on that cross. Will we stand for Him? Our verses for study this week are found in Hosea 11:1-11. God is pleading His case of divine love and full provision for His ungrateful children of Israel.



Brown

God first reminds the people of His great deliverance of their forefathers from bondage in Egypt. Throughout their entire existence as a nation, God had taught them, held them, healed them, led them, freed them, bent down to clothe and

feed them. Just like Mrs. Hosea, generation after generation of God's people responded by turning their backs on Him in stubborn rebellion. The more the prophets spoke and called them to return, the less the people listened. Their offerings and incense burnings were presented in honor and worship of false gods. Meanwhile, a powerful enemy was gathering on their horizon. This time, Assyria, not Egypt, would be their national enemy and captor.

I would love to be able to tell you that they listened to the Word of the Lord through Hosea. They did not. In 722 BC, Assyria came and took the nation of Israel captive. In 586

BC, Judah was exiled to Babylon. God's love may be rejected, but God will not be mocked. In Deuteronomy 27 and 28, you can read about the blessings promised to those who obey the Lord as well as the blessings withheld from those who disobey. At every critical point in their history, God's people seemed to choose anything else and everyone else instead of their Creator.

God sent priests and the people worshipped idols. God sent judges and the people blessed God in times of deliverance and ignored Him in times of peace. God granted their pagan culture loving request and allowed them to have earthly kings to rule over them. Most of those kings modeled how NOT to worship God. All the while, God was speaking through prophets to draw them back unto Himself. Most were outcasts. Many were persecuted. Some were killed. Hosea 11:7 records the reality of a people who are bent on turning from God, no matter the pleading of the prophets.

But wait! Do you hear the heartbeat of God? Do you feel His pain on their behalf? The tender husband displayed in chapters one through three can now be seen as the caring Father. In Hosea 11:8, God literally cries out toward them. His heart is turned upside down with grief over their rejection of His love. In Luke 13:34, Jesus weeps over the city of Jerusalem with these words: "Oh, Jerusalem the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings and you would not have it!" I choose to see the Master Artist as He selects two paint brushes appropriately named Hosea (salvation) and Gomer (finish well). Gripping them firmly in hand, God outlines His picture of undying love. His color choice is crimson red blood mixed with the salty tears of repentance.

Brown is staff evangelist at First Church, Richland.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Got to Have Hope

2 Kings 18:28-32; 19:5-7, 15-19

By W. Wayne VanHorn

In the year 701 B.C., God's people were in a precarious position. They were locked up "like a bird in a cage" by the Assyrian king, Sennacherib. The Assyrians surrounded Jerusalem with 185,000 troops. Sennacherib demanded unconditional surrender or promised a one-sided fight. He taunted Judah's King Hezekiah by offering him 2,000 horses, if he could put riders on them (2 Kings 18:23). The situation looked hopeless. This week's lesson is about having hope even when the circumstances seem to be hopeless. This lesson encourages us to rely on the Lord in the face of life's uncertainties.

The people of Judah had reason to feel hopeless. The Assyrian army had defeated every opponent. They had successfully subdued every city and nation that dared defy

them. What was the city of Jerusalem in the face of such overwhelming odds? To make matters worse, the Assyrians were experts at propaganda. They spoke in the common language of the people, reminding them of their military success, promising the people they would be taken to a rich land, and undermining the people's confidence in Hezekiah. On top of that, the Assyrian king claimed to have the Lord's approval (2 Kings 18:25). Having witnessed the Assyrians destroy Samaria and Israel just two decades earlier as God's judgment on that sinful kingdom, many in Judah believed the Assyrian propaganda.

At the crux of the Assyrian PR campaign was the thrust to tell the common people not to trust in King Hezekiah or his attempt to lead them to trust in



VanHorn

the Lord (2 Kings 18:30-32). The propaganda minister then asked, "Has the god of any nation ever delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria?" (2 Kings 18:33; NIV). At a time when the Lord was their only hope, the people were encouraged by a superior enemy not to trust in the Lord.

Hezekiah sent servants to Isaiah, the faithful prophet. God had given Isaiah a word of hope for the beleaguered king. "Don't be afraid..." "I am going to put such a spirit in him that when he hears a certain report, he will return to his own country, and there I will have him cut down with the sword" (2 Kings 19:6b-7; NIV). Wow! On the surface, things looked hopeless. Things looked like the king of Assyria was in control, when in actuality, the Lord was in control all the time. The outcome of the siege would not be determined by whether Sennacherib or Hezekiah had the strongest

army, but rather, by whether Sennacherib or the Lord was in control. As matters turned out, the hopelessness belonged to Sennacherib, not to Hezekiah.

Sennacherib pressed Hezekiah for unconditional surrender by sending him a letter threatening destruction. Hezekiah went to the temple and spread the letter before the Lord. If you will allow a brief VanHorn paraphrase, Hezekiah basically prayed, "Lord, look what Hezekiah will do to you." In the midst of hopelessness, Hezekiah turned the entire matter over to the Lord, placing his problems in the Lord's capable hands.

In Hezekiah's prayer (2 Kings 19:15-19), he acknowledged the unique status of the Lord as the only true God who created the heavens and the earth. He asked God to hear and see Sennacherib's words mocking Him, the living God. He acknowledged Sennacherib's success in devastating other lands, and destroying the other nations' gods in the fire. Hezekiah knew those idols were not really gods at all, but

made by human hands. He then directly and simply asked the Lord, "deliver us from his hand, that all kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O LORD, are God" (2 Kings 19:19; NIV). The faithful king asked God to do for Judah what he could not do himself, deliver us. Hezekiah saw, in what looked like a hopeless situation to others, a great opportunity for the Lord to act so all kingdoms on earth may know the Lord alone is God.

Because Hezekiah had faith in the Lord to deliver, the most hopeless situation was resolved. God wiped out the Assyrian army. Sennacherib returned home, where he was assassinated by his own sons in the temple of his god. By faith, Hezekiah enjoyed victory when all others had written him off. What about you? Do you face hopelessness in your life? Why not turn to the Lord in faith, placing your problems in His caring hands?

Van Horn is Dean of Christian Studies and the Arts at Mississippi College.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.



2. Wimberly



3. McCully

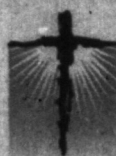


4. Tangipahoa Church, Summit



5. Enterprise Church, Enterprise

3rd Annual Great Commission Conference
A Time of Revival and Renewal
Saturday, March 5th & Sunday, March 6th
PROVIDENCE BAPTIST CHURCH
75 Providence Road • Jaynes, MS 39061
Call (601) 794-7836 for more info.
Registration begins at 10am on March 5th
No Registration Costs • Door Prizes will be given.
Complimentary Lunch and Dinner!
Nursery provided for infants and toddlers!
Kiddington for ages 3-11 with Minister Michael Cooper
The Great Commission Conference is a ministry of the churches of MS.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTISTS

1. **Cleary Church, Florence,** is hosting the See the King conference Apr. 2 - 4. Speaker, Kempton Turner. Sat., 7 p.m.; Sun., 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon., 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 845-2020 or visit www.clearybaptist.org. Free; a love offering will be received.
2. **Andy Wimberly, First Church, Jackson,** is shown holding a Life Application Bible he received after retiring as master of ceremonies for the Tuesday meeting of Men's Stories. He was responsible for arranging guest speakers for nearly 200 meetings during his four years of service.
3. **Iverson Church, Louisville,** honored Billie Joyce McCully for many years of service as organist at the church on Jan. 2. McCully began playing the organ in 1969. She was honored in a special morning service, presented a plaque, and was given a special meal and reception in her honor.
4. **Tangipahoa Church, Summit,** participated in a RA race off. Shown are leader Doyle Wilson, Benjamin Wilkinson and 2nd place winner Sam Collins.
5. **The G.A.'s of Enterprise Church, Enterprise,** decorated valentines and filled each with candy for the Enterprise Senior Citizens Center recently to be distributed along with their meals. Shown are the participants.
6. **Remus Church, Edinburg,** had a Veteran Day's presentation of challenge coins Nov. 14, 2010 for all veterans attending the church. Shown are the participants.
7. **Central Church, McNeill,** ordained Wayne Bagley as deacon Jan. 23. Shown are pastor Billy Galloway, Bagley, and Ford Eastin.



6. Remus Church, Edinburg



7. Central Church, McNeill

READ THE BIBLE FOR LIFE

a part of the READ THE BIBLE FOR LIFE initiative by George Guthrie

April 15-16



PLENARY SPEAKER
DAVID PLATT



TRAINING SESSION LEADER
GEORGE GUTHRIE



SPECIAL GUEST
MICHAEL CARD

Breakout sessions led by faculty of the School of Theology and Missions



More information: 731.661.5579 or
www.uu.edu/events/ReadTheBibleForLife

